

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

The paragraph beginning on page 4, line 11, is being amended as follows:

The sealing of the blank 1 of figure 3 in the form of the tube 1' of figure 4 can be performed by means of the reciprocating laser sealing means 7 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. The blank 1 is gripped adjacent to the sealing point, slightly below the blank members 3, 6 to be jointed in figure 2, using clamps consisting of a pair of jaws 8 pressed against the opposite sides 3, 4 of the blank. The sealing means 7 is equipped with two wedge-shaped elements 9 successive in the direction of movement of the sealing means, which are intended for keeping the seal point open while the laser beam 11 is directed from the laser ~~head beam~~ 10 of the sealing means. The laser ~~head beam~~ 10, which is e.g. a CO₂ laser, is located between the wedge-shaped means 9 for opening the seal point in the direction of movement of the sealing means, and is disposed to direct the laser beam 11 to the seal surfaces of the blank members 3, 6 to be jointed in order to melt the coating polymer on these. An inert protective gas to prevent combustion of the polymer may surround the laser beam 11. The sealing surfaces are jointed by the means 12 for closing the seal point following after the laser ~~head beam~~ 10 and the wedge-shaped opening elements 9, this means being an integrated part of the moving apparatus assembly forming the sealing means 7. The means 12 for closing the seal point consists of parts located on opposite sides of the blank 1 and directing the edge crease 6 on one side 4 of the blank and the edge part on the opposite side 3 of the blank towards each other, the coating polymer forming a tight heat-sealed joint between the surfaces when cooling and solidifying. The opposite parts of the closing means 12 can be shaped as a rearward tapered throat directing the sealable parts of the blank 1, or the parts may be rotating rolls, with the sealable parts of the blank 1 being directed into the nip between these.

The paragraph beginning on page 4, line 35, is being amended as follows:

When the sealing movement of the sealing means 7 starts, the wedge-shaped front opening means 9 on the right-hand side in figure 1 is disposed to press the edge parts 3, 6 of the blank so as to open the seal point. The laser head beam 10 is activated and the sealing means 7 performs the sealing movement from the right to the left in figure 1 so that the laser beam 11 sweeps along the sealing line across the blank 1 from the right edge to the left edge of the blank in figure 1. The movement of the sealing means 7 is continued until the seal closing means 12 following after the 5 laser head beam 10 reaches the left-hand edge of the blank 1. Then the sealed blank is removed from the sealing means, the sealing means resumes its starting position mentioned above, and a new blank is brought supported on the pair of jaws 8 to be sealed by the sealing means as explained above.

The paragraph beginning on page 5, line 10, is being amended as follows:

It is obvious to those skilled in the art that the embodiments of the invention are not confined to the examples given above, but may vary within the following claims. Thus, for instance, the wedge-shaped opening means 9 can be replaced with a tube mounted as a coaxial extension of the laser head beam 10, through which the laser beam is directed to the laser point and which simultaneously acts as a duct for supplying protective gas.